

ROUTING

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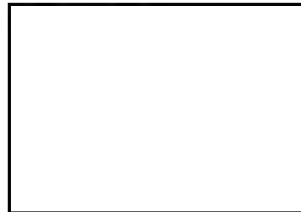
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233



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NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE DAILY CABLE

Tuesday January 11, 1977 CG NIDC 77-008C

State Department review completed



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National Intelligence Daily Cable for Tuesday, January 11, 1977.

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CONTENTS

25X1

POLAND: Western Press on Dissidents

Page 7

Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00975A029700010016-5

25X1

25X1

Approved For Release 2006/03/17 : CIA-RDP79T00975A029700010016-5

Next 5 Page(s) In Document Exempt

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POLAND: Western Press on Dissidents

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[REDACTED] A senior member of the Polish party's Central Committee secretariat told a US embassy representative last week that Western press criticism could complicate the Gierek regime's efforts to deal with dissidence and other delicate domestic problems.

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[REDACTED] Polish leaders evidently hope they can prevent domestic unrest from getting out of hand by selectively harassing individual dissidents. Western criticism of the treatment given Polish dissidents filters into Poland and feeds the unrest.

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[REDACTED] The Polish official asserted that only under "exceptional circumstances" would the authorities take harsher measures against members of the Workers' Defense League and other dissidents. Maintaining that no senior party leader advocates a get-tough policy, he confided frankly that "no one wishes to create martyrs."

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[REDACTED] The official conceded that it would be naive to suppose that there is no dissatisfaction over the economic situation among workers, farmers, intellectuals, students, and even party members. He added that the most unfortunate aspect of dissident activity is the bad impression it creates in the Western press about life in Poland. At the same time, however, he concluded that the major American news publications have been "very responsible" in covering internal Polish developments.

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[REDACTED] Apprehension over Western media coverage of the domestic scene could well reflect continuing irritation over broadcasts by Radio Free Europe. An article in the Polish

armed forces newspaper on Thursday accused the US of attempting to increase Radio Free Europe's propaganda capabilities in the post-Helsinki era. A Polish Foreign Ministry official stated that Poland regards the radio's broadcasting as a violation of the Helsinki Final Act.

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[] The domestic opponents of the government, meanwhile, are keeping up their criticism of the authorities. An open letter was sent on Saturday to Polish legislators calling for an investigation into alleged police brutality against workers protesting food price increases last June. The letter was signed by a group of 172 Polish intellectuals--the largest number reported thus far to have endorsed such a petition. []

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